From:	Deborah Epstein
To:	City Council
Subject:	Mass Against HP
Date:	Tuesday, April 24, 2018 10:22:21 AM

Dear City Council,

Many thanks for serving our city! As a Cambridge resident for the last 39 years, and as. Business owner in Cambridge for the last 30 years, I feel that my family and I have a great deal of our lives invested here.

I am disturbed by the discussion to break off contracts with HP. I understand and agree that Palestinians need to be heard, seen, included, that the Israelis, and especially their current administration, are not blameless for many problematic issues. However, **I disagree with an Israeli boycott, or a boycott of companies that do business with Israel.**

Just as the US's present administration does not represent me, I fully believe that the Israeli current administration does not represent the people of Israel, as it does not represent me as a Jew.

I do not agree with those who believe that starving Israel will solve any problems at all. As a matter of fact, yesterday I received a letter from my college, Barnard College, who is struggling with this same issue of a call from students and outside groups to boycott Israel. I commend the answer of the President of the College. Here is an excerpt:

"For any referendum related to Barnard's endowment to be considered by the Board of Trustees, it should meet two exacting standards. The issue under discussion must relate directly to Barnard's mission, and there must be a clear consensus across the Barnard community that the recommended approach is the best means to address the issue at hand.

The referendum you are currently considering does not meet these two standards. First, taking an institutional stand amid the complexities of the Mideast conflict would risk chilling campus discourse on a set of issues that members of our community should be able to discuss and debate freely. Choosing a side therefore would be inconsistent with our mission. Second, there is clearly not consensus across the Barnard community on whether or how to address the issue. ... For these reasons, Barnard will not take action in response to this referendum.

It is imperative that all of us at Barnard work hard to foster a community in which difficult topics can be discussed in an environment free from fear and hate."

I do understand the difference between a college and a city, but I believe that both of the criteria stated here apply to Cambridge, and I come down on the same side of recommending against taking action against Israel when the list of human rights violators coddled by the City of Cambridge is long and indefensible. **Taking such a limited action, and only against Israel, to me feels anti-Semitic, in a time when many Jews are working tirelessly to fight the Muslim ban, work for peace in the Middle East, and otherwise improve the world for all of us.**

Many thanks,

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